

# HISTORY OF WASATCH COUNTY

In the same year that the 13 colonies revolted against English rule and signed the Declaration of Independence, the first white men traveled through Wasatch valley. At least, this is the earliest recorded date of any visit by white men through this region.

Two Franciscan friars, Francisco Antanasio Dominguez and Silvestre Velez de Escalante, the famed Father Escalante who explored Utah, started from Santa Fe for the purpose of discovering a direct route to Monterey, California, site of one of their largest missions. They began their journey in July, 1776.

According to descriptions of their journal, they passed through what is now Colorado. They crossed into what is now Utah near White river. The best interpretation of their journal claims they followed Green river for some distance, crossed over to the Duchesne river and followed probably what was the west fork crossing the mountain at the head of Lake canyon and coming down through Wasatch valley and Provo river to Utah lake.

White trappers undoubtedly traversed the valley in later years, but it was not until 1835, less than a dozen years after the first Mormons came west, that permanent homes and settlers came to Wasatch valley.

This first settlement in 1835 was sparse, limited to less than half a dozen homes in the lower end of the valley. From the journal of John Crook, self-appointed historian and one of the first men ever to settle here, we learn that William M. Wall, George W. Bean, William Meeks, Aaron Daniels and others brought stock and grazed it in the summer of 1838, and also started the construction of ranch homes. Mr. Crook's journal says: "William M. Wall built a ranch at the south end of the valley. Father Decker bought the valley later known as Daniels Brown's home. Aaron built a ranch house about two miles north of Daniels, on what later became known as Meeks Bottoms. All of the above parties I think kept some stock through the winter in the valley."

The journal says Father Decker "bought" a place, which would lead one to believe he did not cause there would have been no places to buy from anyone. Several old settlers agree that Wall Meeks and Daniels were the first men to build homes here. Mr.

Crook's journal does not make this point entirely clear, and there is little else written on the subject that could be considered authoritative.

While these ranchers were building homes in the summer and fall of 1838, two survey parties of Provo men, headed by J. C. Snow, visited the valley twice, one in July and once in October, and surveyed two tracts in the north and central portions of the valley, dividing them into 20 acre tracts and claiming all the surveyed plots. They did not serve, however, returning to Utah valley that fall. It is recorded that the ice froze half an inch thick in the water cups of the July surveying party one night. The party claimed over 100 tracts before summer's end.

Next year, in the spring of 1839 a group of Provo men, one of whom was Mr. Crook, started for Wasatch valley, then known as Provo valley, to settle there. The party included, besides Mr. Crook, Charles N. Carroll, John Carpenter, John Jordan, John Carline, St. James Carline, Mr. Carpenter, whose first name was not designated, Jesse Bond, Henry Chavon and William Giles. On the last day of April they started for the valley, taking their wagons apart and carrying them piece by piece over a huge snowslide in Provo canyon. The next day they traveled to William Wall's ranch and reached it the first day of May, 1839.

Mr. Crook's journal of the trip continues: "Early the next morning we crossed the river and after traveling for about two miles we arrived at Daniels' ranch, where we crossed the creek on ice. We journeyed on about a mile further to Meeks' ranch, turned our teams out to feed and concluded to have breakfast. After breakfast was over, we started out on foot in a northerly direction to look out a suitable place for the location of our camp. We found it very difficult to cross Center Creek because of the some good land just north of it. So we went to work and staked drifts of snow which lay in a few willows along the banks in a few hours we arrived at the plat of ground designated for a city; near the place were John M. Murdock's dwelling house now stands."

When Mr. Crook makes reference to the present tense, it should be remembered his account was compiled and written from his journal for the first issues of the Wasatch Way, in 1889, and it is from there this is taken.

First Soil Turned

"In looking north we saw two dark objects moving along; and after gazing intently for some time we saw that they were moving backwards and forwards. The idea struck us that it was some parties plowing, so off we started to fathom the problem: in drawing near to the objects we found our conjectures to be correct. The first man we reached was William Davidson, with two yoke of cattle and plowing in the twenty acres of land now owned by John Turner in the north field. The other team of two yoke of cattle belonged to Robert Broadhead and James Davis. They were plowing on a piece of ground due east of William Davidson. On inquiry they told us they had been in the valley about two weeks, but on account of a big snow storm until the day before, which was the first day of May. I think this was a plow in soil turned over with a plow in the valley. These parties had come from Salt Creek or Nephi, Utah county."

From Mr. Crook's journal, it seems evident that William Wall, Aaron Daniels and William Meeks built the first ranch homes in 1838, and that William Davidson, Robert Broadhead and James Davis were the first farmers in the valley, coming about the middle of April and turning over the first land although Mr. Crook's party of 10 followed them by only two weeks.

Mr. Crook's journal continues: "They were plowing inside of the one and one-half mile square plat of land surveyed the preceeding July. This plat of land being already claimed, and our party not feeling desirous of jumping any one's claim, concluded to examine further on up the river. We traveled on about half a mile and found the north line west line of Main street for eight half blocks; thence west five and a half blocks; thence north eight blocks north to the north field line of survey."

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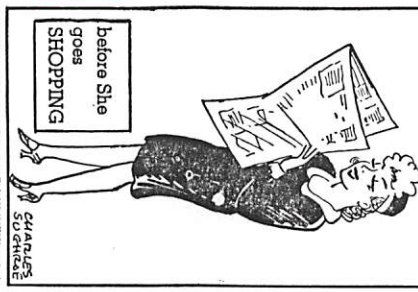
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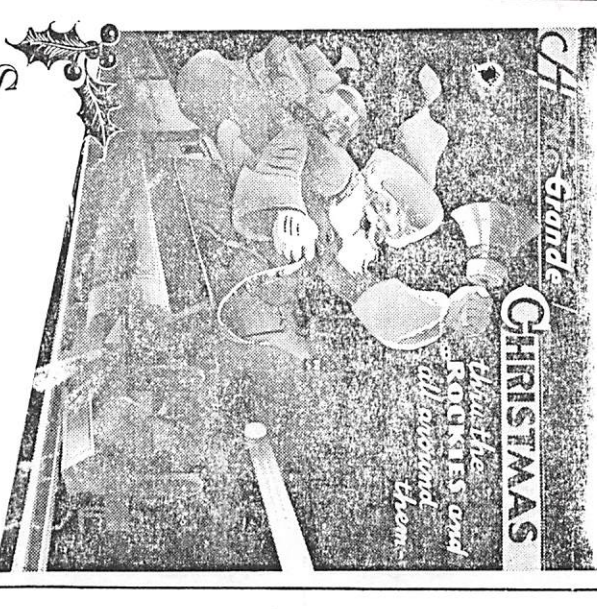


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W. D. Ely, Agent Phone 31





# HISTORY OF WASATCH COUNTY

In the same year that the 13 colonies revolted against English rule and signed the Declaration of Independence, the first white men traveled through Wasatch valley. At least, this is the earliest recorded date of any visit by white men through this region.

Two Franciscan friars, Francisco Antanasio Dominguez and Silves- tre Velez de Escalante, the famed Father Escalante who explored Utah, started from Santa Fe for the purpose of discovering a direct route to Monterey, California, site of one of their largest mis- sions. They began their journey in July, 1776.

According to descriptions of their journal, they passed through what is now Colorado. They cross- ed into what is now Utah near White river. The best interpreta- tion of their journal claims they followed Green river for some dis- tance, crossed over to the Du- chesne river and followed prob- ably what was the west fork crossing the mountain at the head of Lake canyon and coming down through Wasatch valley and Pro- vo river to Utah lake.

White trappers undoubtedly traversed the valley in later years, but it was not until 1858, less than a dozen years after the first Mormons came west, that permanent homes and settlers came to Wasatch valley.

This first settlement in 1858 was sparse, limited to less than half a dozen homes in the lower end of the valley. From the jour- nal of John Crook, self-appointed historian and one of the first men ever to settle here, we learn that William M. Wall, George W. Bean, William Meeks, Aaron Dan- iels and others brought stock and grazed it in the summer of 1858, and also started the construction of ranch homes. Mr. Crook's jour- nal says: "William M. Wall built a ranch at the south end of the valley. Father Decker bought the valley, later known as John Brown's home. Aaron Daniels built a ranch house about two miles north of Daniels, on what became known as Meeks and Bottoms. All of the above parties and Lake Creek because of the drifts of snow which lay in the winter in the valley."

"The journal says Father Decker bought a place, which would lead one to believe he did not settle that first year of 1858 be- cause there would have been no places to buy from anyone. Sev- eral old settlers agree that Wall Meeks and Daniels were the first men to build homes here. Mr.

Crook's journal does not make this point entirely clear, and there is little else written on the sub- ject that could be considered authoritative.

While these ranchers were building homes in the summer and fall of 1858, two survey par- ties of Provo men, headed by J. C. Snow, visited the valley twice, one in July and once in Octo- ber, and surveyed two tracts in the north and central portions of the valley, dividing them into 20 acre tracts, and claiming all the surveyed plots. They did not ser- vice, however, returning to Utah the valley that fall. It is recorded that ice froze half an inch thick in the water cups of the July sur- veying party one night. The par- ty claimed over 100 tracts be- fore summer's end.

Next year, in the spring of 1859 a group of Provo men, one of whom was Mr. Crook, started for Wasatch valley, then known as Provo valley, to settle there. The party included, besides Mr. Crook, Charles N. Carroll, John Carpen- band, John Jordan, John Carpen- ter, James Carlie, Mr. Carpen- ter, whose first name was not designated, Jesse Bond, Henry Chawin and William Gies. On the last day of April they started for the valley, taking their wagons apart and carrying them piece by piece over a huge snowslide in Provo canyon. The next day they traveled to William Wall's ranch and reached it the first day of May, 1859.

Mr. Crook's journal of the trip continues: "Early the next morning we crossed the river and after trav- eling for about two miles we ar- rived at Daniels' ranch. We jour- neyed on about a mile further to Meek's ranch, turned our teams out to feed and concluded to have breakfast. After breakfast was over, we started out on foot in a northerly direction to look out a suitable place for the location of our camp. We found it very difficult to cross Center Creek because of the some good land just north of it. So we went to work and staked off twenty acres each as near as willows along the banks. In a few hours we arrived at the plat of ground designated for a city: near the place were John M. Mur- ray, dwelling house now stands." When Mr. Crook makes refer- ence to the present tense, it should be remembered his account was

compiled and written from his journal for the first issues of the Wasatch Wave, in 1889, and it is from there this is taken.

"In looking north we saw two dark objects moving along; and after gazing intently for some time we saw that they were mov- ing backwards and forwards. The idea struck us that it was some parties plowing, so off we start- ed to fathom the problem: in drawing near to the objects we found our conjectures to be cor- rect. The first man we reached was William Davidson, with two yoke of cattle and plowing on the twenty acres of land now owned by John Turner in the north field. The other team of two yoke of cattle belonged to Robert Broadhead and James Da- vis. They were plowing on a piece of ground due east of William Davidson. On inquiry they told us they had been in the valley about two weeks, but on account of a big snow storm now plowing had been done until the day be- fore, which was the first day of May. I think this was a plot in the valley. These parties had come from Salt Creek or Nephi, Utah county."

From Mr. Crook's journal, it seems evident that William Wall, Aaron Daniels and William Meeks built the first ranch homes in 1858, and that William Davidson, Robert Broadhead and James Davis were the first farmers in the valley, coming about the mid- dle of April and turning over the first land although Mr. Crook's party of 10 followed them by only two weeks.

Mr. Crook's journal continues: "They were plowing inside of the one and one-half mile square plat of land surveyed the pre- ceding July. This plat of land be- lieved already claimed, and our par- ty not feeling desirous of jump- ing any one's claim, concluded to examine further on up the river. We traveled on about half a mile and found the north line of our camp. The survey was run on the west line of Main street for eight blocks; thence west five and a half blocks; thence north eight blocks north to the north field line of survey."

Immediately and commenced to build a large pickup of poles, covering it with willows, long wheat grass and dirt. I have known as many as 30 persons crowded in there of a night. Be- ing a mammoth affair, it was christened the London pickup, hence the name London Spring. The moving and building occupied about two days, and I think on the fifth of May, Thomas Rashard and myself, having only one yoke of cattle each, joined our teams and commenced plowing."

The party of 10 was predomi- nantly English, hence the name London creek and London spring. It runs today about two miles north of town. The area was also known as New London by many settlers.

Daughter Named Timpanogos The family of William David- son was believed to be the first family to settle in the valley. His daughter when he named Tim- panogos after the mountain, was the first white child born in the valley.

About May 20 of the same sum- mer the settlers arrived, 1859, some of the 10 men returned to Provo for grain and supplies, and were accompanied on their return by quite a number of new settlers, among them Thomas H. Gies, Hyrum Oaks, Martin Oaks, Sydney Deperson, and others. About the last of May another party arrived. More land was sur- veyed, and parties came and went all summer long acquiring ground. Some stayed to settle, and the growth and development of Wa- satch valley had begun. The towns of Heber and Provo were surveyed this same summer.

Best Wishes  
For A Joyous Season



Clarence Olson

Again we extend the  
Season's Greetings to  
each of you. May this  
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(Continued on another page)

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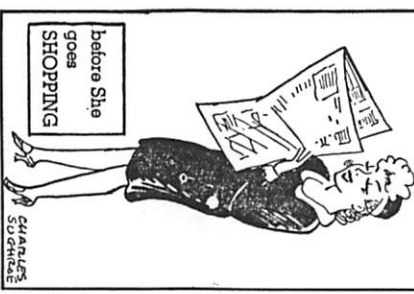
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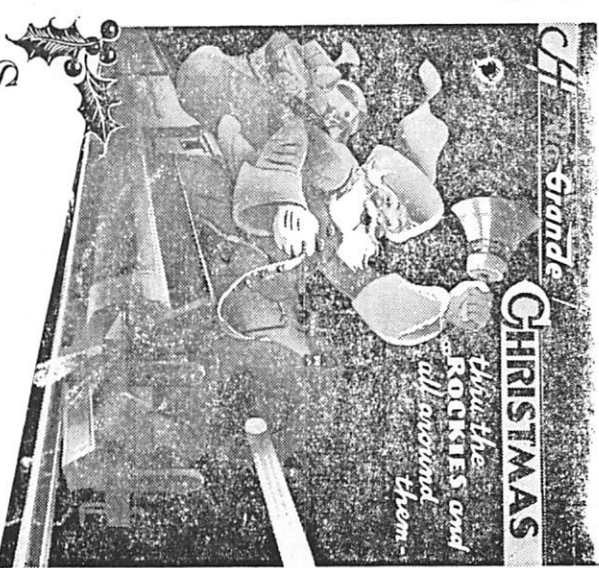


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**Fort Soon Filled**  
The fort lines were all filled up by the fall of 1860, with two families to the four rods formerly allotted one, in many instances. There were over 40 families in

(Continued on another page)

**Wishes  
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be your most  
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### Indian War Reaches Wasatch

The Black Hawk Indian war spread to Wasatch valley in 1866. The three settlements in the west side of the valley merged into one and the name of the town, Midway, resulted. They settled at the middle community and built a fort.

Although no white person was killed or wounded by Indians in this valley during the Black Hawk much stock was driven off, killed and stolen. The threat was always present and only constant vigilance and armed strength prevented blood shed. More than 250 men were organized into active military duty, in two companies of cavalry and four of infantry. William Wall's cavalry had several brushes with the Indians, and in one skirmish they killed two redskins and wounded several more. Raids on cattle and other stock continued through the summer of 1866 and most of 1867. In August of the latter year, the final peace treaty was signed which ended the war in this valley. It is commemorated by the monument on the stakehouse grounds.

Wasatch county was officially created in 1862 by an act of the state legislature, bounded on the west by the summit of the Wasatch range, on the north by Summit county, on the east by the territorial line and on the south by Sanpete county. John W. Witt was the first probate judge.

The ending of Indian troubles in the valley removed the last serious obstacle to growth, and settlers flocked to the valley in the years that followed. In 1889, the Wasatch Wave was started under editorship of William Buys. Its first issue, on file in the Wave office, was dated March 23.

Heber City grew rapidly, having a population of around 2,000 in the first years of the twentieth century. A predominantly rural

population, with farming and livestock raising as the chief occupations, continued until the mines began to open and employ great numbers of men in the late 1920's. Since then, the mine payroll has been one of the largest and most important in the county. Wasatch county still remains a leading livestock center, however, with dairying making great strides in the past few years. Fine sheep are perhaps the county's best known product, an industry that has been built up from the first days of the valley's settlement.

Wasatch county stands today as one of the most prosperous regions in the state, with a diversified livelihood of mining, farming and stockraising.

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## Heber's First Christmas

One third of Heber's families could not get under the same roof for a banquet today, but they did in 1859 at the first Christmas ever observed here.

Six families out of a total of 17 attended a Christmas banquet prepared by Sarah, or "Mother" Lee, as she was known to everyone, according to John Crook's journal of early Heber history. Accommodations were small, and it was impossible to invite more. Those invited were Thomas Rasband, James and Bessie Carlile, Charles N. Carroll, John Jordan and Mr. Crook, with their families. The house in which the ban-

quet was held was built on the city lot owned by Ann Howarth, a log cabin about 16 feet square with a bowery on the south front.

The event is related in Mr. Crook's journal as follows:

"It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining clear and cold, some snow on the ground. Tables were set under the bowery outside. The menu consisted of ground cherry pudding, squash was brought from the lower valley. These were sweetened with beet or carrot syrup. There was no sugar to be had. There were other vegetables and good bread. All supplies were brought from the lower valley, as Brother John

Lee did not raise any crop the first year.

"Christmas week was a gay time. After the banquet, a party of young folks arrived, some three or four sleigh loads from Provo City. Most of the young people, especially the boys had been in the valley in the summer

and had harvested some grain on Center Creek. There were gay times when they arrived, with dancing and amusements. About New Years they returned home. Then we were left with no mail and no visitors and clear, cold weather prevailed. Snow was about 18 inches deep."



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